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UNCLAS KINSHASA 000332

SIPDIS

E.O. 12958: N/A

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SUBJECT: OFFICIAL REQUEST FROM GDROC FOR U.S. MILITARY  
COOPERATION AND ASSISTANCE

11. Embassy received February 24 two letters from DRC Minister of Defense Alphonse Onasumba to acting Deputy Assistant Secretary of Defense Theresa Whelan, requesting that the U.S.

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consider reactivating the Status of Forces Agreement (SOFA) with the DRC and provide assistance to the Trilateral Agreement by locating the proposed fusion cell in the DRC. Informal Embassy translation of the letters follows. Embassy will forward the originals to the Pentagon.

Letter #1

February 24, 2005

Letter of Intent

(complementary opening)

The Congolese Government appreciates its good relations with the United States.

I salute the efforts of the U.S. Government to assist the transition in the DRC, particularly in the arena of resolving general issues of defense and security and in particular, for the formation of a new and restructured national army.

The GDROC hopes to reinforce the cooperative relations between our two governments in the area of military cooperation by revitalizing the existing Status of Forces Agreement (SOFA) and by concluding a new agreement on Acquisition and Cross-Servicing (ACSA), and notably, seeks cooperation in the training of Congolese officers, the expansion of the language laboratory, establishment of a military program to combat HIV/AIDS, etc.

(complementary close)

Letter #2

February 23, 2005

The GDROC views with the greatest interest the proposal by the U.S. to establish a fusion cell in support of the Trilateral Agreement.

The GDROC strongly hopes that the U.S. will agree to establish this cell on its territory, perhaps in Goma (province of North Kivu) or Bukavu (province of South Kivu).

The Congolese Ministry of Defense is prepared to fully support the operations of this cell by contributing Congolese experts and also by assuring the security of all personnel attached to the fusion cell.

It is clear that establishing this Trilateral institution in the Congo would greatly improve the workings of the Joint Verification Mission (JVM) operating in Goma and soon to begin operating in Bukavu.

(complementary close)

12. Bujumbura minimize considered.

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